

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested. Claims 1-51 are pending. Claim 41 has been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 18-32 and 42-51 are withdrawn from consideration. No new matter has been added by this amendment. Claims 1-17 and 33-40 are currently at issue.

Response to Restriction Requirement

Invention Group IA is elected for prosecution on the merits. The claims 1-17 and 33-40 are included in Invention Group IA.

Claim amendments

Claim 1 has been amended to more particularly describe the invention. Support for this amendment can be found in the specification (See, for example page 9, lines 14-24) and original claim 3. Claim 3 has been amended to remove an element currently recited in claim 1. Claim 23 has been amended to conform to U.S. claim practice. No new matter has been added by these amendments.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) and 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1-17 and 33-40 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by, or alternatively obvious over, U.S. Patent No. 6,376,611 to Matzinger ("Matzinger"). The Examiner states that the hybrid polymers and copolymers of the ink in Matzinger anticipate the polymers or copolymers of the ink in the present invention. In the alternative, the Examiner states that the claimed ink is obvious over the ink compositions of Matzinger. The Examiner further states that the hybrid polymers are applied to a suitable substrate, such as aluminum.

While Matzinger does disclose ink compositions that can be applied to substrates such as aluminum, these "substrates" represent the final surface to be printed, not a lithographic printing form that is in turn used to print to a final surface, as called for in the claims of the present invention.

In Matzinger, the inks are “hot melt” ink compositions that undergo a phase change upon heating (*i.e.* they are melted), and are then transferred to a “substrate.” This “substrate” is the final printed surface. As stated in Matzinger, after printing the ink dries and remains on the printed surface:

“The inks should dry quickly onto the printed substrate as well as adhere well to said substrate to provide a print with resistance to abrasion, water, and solvents. The ink compositions of the present invention meet these requirements.” (Column 7, lines 4-7 of Matzinger).

In the claims of the present invention, the substrate is not the final printed surface, but rather a “printing form” useful in the transfer of the desired print to a final printed surface by direct contact.

Nothing in Matzinger, or any other cited art, discloses or suggests a printing form comprising a dried and hardened ink, as called for in the claims of the present invention. The Examiner is therefore respectfully requested to withdraw the rejection of claims 1-17 and 33-40 for anticipation, and in the alternative, the rejection for obviousness.

In view of the preceding comments and amendments, the pending claims are believed to be in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited.

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Respectfully submitted,

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